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Chicago Prosecutor Pressed For Indictments, Juror Says

CHICAGO, Sept. 2 (AP)—A member of the grand jury that indicted State's Attorney Edward V. Hanrahan said today that after the jurors first voted to return no indictments, special prosecutor Barnabas F. Sears told them he wasn't pleased. Sears then talked to the jurors for 90 minutes to convince them to return the indictments, the member said.

"On April 20, 1971, we voted no bills on all indictments Mr. Sears had presented to us," said Clara B. Goucher in a statement. "When . . . he was told, he expressed his displeasure by frowning." A no bill is a declaration of insufficient evidence to support a charge.

Sears asked the jurors to return the next day, Mrs. Goucher said. "When we came back . . . he said it appeared it was necessary that he talk to us. He sat down and talked for 90 minutes. He told us he wasn't pleased . . . and couldn't understand how we could have voted no bills.

"He then started giving us reasons why we should indict each person named in an indictment."

Mrs. Goucher's statement was put on the record of the Circuit Court Wednesday night. Hanrahan and John P. Coghlan, one of the attorneys representing Hanrahan's codefendants, flew to Washington, Iowa, Wednesday to obtain the statement. Mrs. Goucher was visiting relatives there.

In Chicago today Chief Criminal Court Judge Joseph A. Power dismissed the grand jury after overruling a petition by special prosecutor Sears seeking an extension of the jury's life for 30 days. The action frees defense attorneys to question the grand jurors.

Sears argued unsuccessfully that it was premature to dissolve the jury and free its members to talk.

Power ruled orally on Tuesday that defense and prosecution attorneys might talk to the jurors.

The indictments charge Hanrahan and 13 other defendants, including policemen,

with obstructing justice in the wake of a police raid in which two Black Panthers were killed. Hanrahan and the others have refused to plead to the indictments, contending they are invalid because, the defendants say, Sears exerted undue influence on the grand jury.

Sears said again Wednesday he did not unduly influence the jury. He declined, however, to comment directly on Mrs. Goucher's statement.

Among the reasons Sears gave for indictments, according to Mrs. Goucher was "that if there was just a slight possibility that the defendants were guilty, we should vote as saying 'they will eventually be cleared if they are not guilty.'"

"Expressed Disbelief"

As to the conduct of the investigation, Mrs. Goucher said, "All during the course . . . Mr. Sears expressed his disbelief with gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice when Hanrahan, then police Deputy Superintendent John F. Mulchrone and other police witnesses testified. He (Sears) was courteous and polite to Panthers but not to police."

Mrs. Goucher said that after the grand jury voted true bills, "I was so upset by Mr. Sears' conduct . . . that I did go to Judge Power and protested."